

Gathering our Thoughts

SMT's thinking at the start of the Mid-Term Review

Paper #1, November 2010

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1. Introduction

Welcome to SMT's first paper on the Mid Term Review (MTR). This is the first of a few contributions SMT plans to make to articulate our thinking in a way that helps to move forward with some clarity and momentum.

This document is intended as a reference material for all staff and Board (and local groups who want it) as we embark on the coming months to help us all refer consistently to the same information, questions, terms and outcomes. At this moment we expect that the documents SMT will subsequently produce in January and April will follow the same broad structure, as we work towards finalising the content we update and add at the various levels of our 'strategic architecture' (like vision, mission statement etc).

We'll spend the next six months or so on this first phase of the MTR, timed to find a balance between stretching it out so long that we lose momentum and being so compressed and intensive that it distracts us from other critical work we have to do in the near term. We want everyone who wants to, to be able to engage. Indeed, it's likely to entail important work for many of us. Some of that we hope we have anticipated with a thorough project plan, but as the process unfolds there will inevitably be other needs, ideas and challenges that arise.

What does this really all mean for everyone involved? The MTR aims to achieve two outcomes for Friends of the Earth, both of which should make a real difference to our individual and collective work here:

- i) Refresh our long term vision and strategy: We're half way through the existing strategy SP2. The review should enable us to learn from the work on SP2 so far, and serve as a refresher on why we all work here and what it is we want to make happen as Friends of

the Earth in the future. This will mean that as 2011 progresses, we should start to have an increasingly strong sense of all 'being on the same page' about our work together and having a high level of confidence that what we are all working on – collectively and individually – are the most important things we could possibly be doing to further Friends of the Earth's mission.

- ii) Contribute to current work: The MTR should also reinforce our thinking about key initiatives for our work in the near future, particularly our new campaigns concept and our 40th anniversary.

As a by-product, we also hope to see a better approach to strategising and planning that helps us make better, quicker operational decisions in response to the external world, more in keeping with the agility and responsiveness we all know we need in our work.

Much work has been done to set the approach and scope of the MTR clearly and this has now been finalised by the SMT. For a full explanation, you may want to read the [design document](#) as we don't cover that here.

The next three sections introduce the content we expect to review during the MTR.

2. Who are we and why are we here? Key concepts: Vision, Mission, Values

Each of these concepts is an existing element of our strategic architecture. By the end of the MTR we, as an organisation, will have updated our thinking and recommitted to these concepts in some form. The refreshing of these concepts will happen through phases of discussion led by the SMT and overseen by our Board. These discussions will explore and thread together the connections between these concepts and the Strategic Questions described under 4, punctuated along the way by documents published by SMT.

At this point you may want to refresh your memory of the existing SP2 content, including the stated Vision, Mission and Values. It's all in the appendix.

3. What do we do and how do we do it? Key concepts: Goals and Strategy.

Unlike *Who we are and Why we are here*, these terms have either not been defined explicitly for Friends of the Earth at present, or they exist in more disparate forms. By the end of the MTR, we aim to be able to pinpoint exactly what we do and what makes us unique as an organisation. We will talk during the MTR about ways in which we may want to update or clarify existing assumptions and approaches in these levels of our work and thinking. The definitions of what we would expect to cover is appended in the glossary.

At present, all of these elements are covered in SP2 to some extent, so that will be important material to refer to – it's appended.

4. Strategic questions

Identified below are what we see as nine areas of tension or confusion in the organisation at present. Many of them are not new. However, establishing greater organisational understanding of these questions and coherent organisational answers is, we believe, essential to being able to refresh all levels of our thinking, from Vision to Goals and Strategy. These are therefore key questions for the coming months.

We have defined and described each question in terms of how they appear in the organisation. We then offer, as a way into the debate, what we see as some possible options for resolution – including, out of rigour, the possible option of doing nothing! (However, in no case does the SMT believe that simply doing nothing would be the right response). These options are often not mutually exclusive. In some cases clarity and consensus may be reached by discussion between staff and other stakeholders. Others may not require agreement, and may simply be inherent – even creative – tensions that we have to continue to manage in a more fluid way. It may also be that we decide together that some of the questions need less debate and that a simple solution already exists.

A) WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, WHEN IT COMES TO OUR WORK?

Within the organisation there are different interpretations of what sustainable development means, and therefore what we should aim to achieve and how we should aim to achieve it.

Manifestations of this include:

- No recently, clearly articulated vision of what a sustainable future that FOE could make a realistic contribution to actually looks like.
- A split around whether we need to work on a broad range of issues in order to be a sustainable development organisation, or whether we should be guided by our understanding of sustainable development and then identify what we need to prioritise to help deliver on sustainable development (with others delivering on other things too).
- Divergent views on the weight we should give to means versus ends
- Divergent views on where we can have the most impact
- Divergent views on the balance between equity, urgency, the needs of people vs environmental conservation etc.

Options for a response

- a) Do nothing to update our thinking and response to Sustainable Development, and continue to assume that it is simply the underpinning narrative to our whole approach.
- b) Clarify our definition, approach, and aims regarding how we relate to Sustainable Development in practise, *but don't change* our aims or the work we do to deliver them.
- c) Clarify our definition and review our aims and how we intend to achieve them within that, with the potential of changing some aims and the mix and balance of approaches.
- d) Decide that, given the real state of emergency we find ourselves in on climate change, biodiversity loss etc, Sustainable Development is too distant an ideal and that it is in danger of distracting us from securing at least the remedial measures to the urgent threats facing much of humanity;

B) WHAT'S THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN BREADTH AND DEPTH IN OUR AGENDA?

Linked to question A), there are different views as to the number of issues we should work on, with some favouring a larger breadth of issues and some favouring a much narrower range. This is linked to a number of other underlying issue, such as different views on the meaning and application of sustainable development.

Manifestations of the issue include:

- different views on how responsive or reactive we should be.

- different views on what it means to be a 'grass roots organisation' and the role of the centre in this;
- Tensions over the number of campaigns we run at any one time, particularly when resources are very constrained
- Different views over what kind of expertise we need on the staff body
- Different views on the value of organising information and knowledge we have for greater ease of access and use by others

Options for a response

- a) Keep the balance of issues as it is.
- b) Cut one or more issues completely, but keep the proportional investment in the remainder the same.
- c) Cut one or more completely and vary the investment in the others to some degree.
- d) Decide that we generally want to cover fewer things but with more depth.
- e) Decide that we generally want to cover more things but with less depth
- f) Decide we want to cover a similar range of issues to now in depth, but extend the range of those we cover at less depth by, for example, using more advanced information and 'knowledge organisation' methods and making more use of the expertise in the network.
- g) Come up with an approach that allows us to adjust our combination of breadth and depth as our priorities and needs change.

C) WHAT IS THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE FOR US OF MEANS AND ENDS?

There are differing views in the organisation as to whether it is necessary to compromise on our ideals about our means in the interests of achieving some gain towards our ends, and if so how much and in what ways. Some people believe that the means we use are as important as the ends. Underlying this issue are, of course, different values as well as different views about how to achieve sustainable development etc. There may also be confusion between personal beliefs and organisational beliefs, in part because the organisational beliefs are not clear.

Manifestations include:

- Sharp debate around whether the urgency of climate change means we must compromise on our long term ideals for shorter term gain (or not).
- Different views on the wisdom or acceptability of working with big business to advance an agenda

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing differently and continue to work with this tension, relying on our own leadership and reasoning to make sound decisions on a case by case basis;
- b) Never compromise our ideals on means to achieve a given end;
- c) Develop a clear position on when if at all we may be prepared to put ends before means, based on some sort of analysis of evaluating a given ally (eg business or government) or activity, on the basis of whether it leads us toward our ends without some sort of unacceptable compromising of our means.

D) WHO OR WHAT DO WE PRIORITISE HELPING?

There are different assumptions about who our primary beneficiaries are, particularly about the right balance between working to affect change for everyone, or the poorest and most vulnerable in the

world, or for UK citizens. A linked debate is about where we work: should we work where there is greater injustice or where we have greatest agency.

Manifestations include:

- Differences of opinion over the relative merits of focusing on areas or sectors experiencing greater environmental injustice versus areas or sectors where we may get more rapid traction for national level change
- Differences of views over the appropriate level of influence of our local groups vs other stakeholders
- Differences of views over the appropriate balance of resources to support local campaigns vs to support national/international scale policy change; or to support policy change vs some practical action. Do we have the right balance?
- Differences of views over whether we should put safeguarding the environment above everything else
- Differences of opinion over the appropriate priority of our international work, with FOE I and FOE E, vs work in the UK

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing – no greater clarity needed.
- b) Prioritise serving specific interests of the public of England, Wales and Northern Ireland at large (eg desire to preserve the environment or increase wellbeing)
- c) Decide ourselves to prioritise serving the world's poor in particular, gain access to a healthy environment, in the context of sustainable development
- d) Decide ourselves to prioritise serving the most vulnerable in the E,W, NI in gaining access to a healthy environment
- e) Decide to continue to balance and integrate our efforts between all the above options but in some more conscious and explicit way that links more clearly to achieving our goals.

E) WHAT SIZE DO WE NEED THE ORGANISATION TO BE?

There are different views as to whether the organisation needs to grow or not. Some people feel that in order to achieve our goals we need to grow the organisation considerably. Others feel that we may already be the best size for an organisation trying to do what we do .

Manifestations of this include:

- At the spring Away Days: Some people believing that the organisation definitely should grow, while others believe that the movement needs organisations of different sizes, and FOE has a 'set' or ideal size which it doesn't need to grow beyond.
- Different attitudes towards the merits of investing in fundraising and communications and supporter recruitment.
- Often expressed fear that by growing we become more conservative in our positions (the perception of what has happened with WWF) and that smaller organisations are better able to retain their independence.
- At the same time there are very few if any people who have expressed the belief that their part of the organisation can decrease in size- and many who think their area needs increase.

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing – have no plan for growth or shrinkage in any way, which would almost certainly mean that we would shrink in the present climate.

- b) Decide that we want to grow our movement – our supporters of all types – and that we can do this without growing our staff or income further.
- c) Decide that we want to grow our movement but that to do this we need to increase one or more of staff and operational expenditure.
- d) Decide that we do not want to grow our movement and that we consequently do not need to grow.
- e) Decide that we want to grow our expertise in other aspects of campaigning and that we either want to grow our income or reallocate resource from some other part of our operations to do this
- f) Seek more formal collaboration with another compatible and complimentary organisation in order to share resources and have greater combined impact.

F) WHAT IS THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN BEING LED FROM THE FRONT AND LED FROM AMONGST?

*There are sharp differences between people who think that **we need to show more directive leadership (due to urgency/efficiency) and those who believe that the most effective decisions will come from a higher degree of participation. Again, in addition to people's personal preferences, some of this comes from sharply differing values and beliefs for example about the nature of sustainable development and how we should manifest that organisationally.***

Manifestations include:

- Strong appeals for much greater and longer participation in the Change Process
- Strong appeals at the Away Days and since for the SMT and the ED in particular to be clear about the direction of the organisation.
- Appeals for the Mid-Term Review to be both a) more rapid, and b) more participative involving more stakeholders more deeply.
- Staff unsure what ED thinks and where he wants to lead
- ED who is highly collaborative as a norm, but can be very directive in some circumstances.

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing
- b) Every major issue is discussed participatively and decisions are made by consensus or democratically if at all possible, but by leadership if necessary accepting that leadership carries the responsibility and accountability for ensuring the best decisions.
- c) We deploy participative methods as a norm for decision making but seek to make these as agile as possible. We also expect leaders to give direction as a norm to those for whom they are responsible. Recognising that some situations require rapid and sometimes tough judgements, it is for the leader to decide whether s/he wishes to exercise his/her responsibility to ensure the best decision by allowing a decision to be reached by consensus, by democracy (majority vote) or by taking the final decisions themselves.
- d) Rather than starting from an assumption that participation as a means is more important than reaching the end decision, focus on involving the *most efficient number* of contributors to a decision that will deliver the best outcome (based on timeliness and quality)

G) WHAT IS THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN PLANNING AND FLEXIBILITY TO BE RESPONSIVE?

Pressures in the organisation at present pull us between needing to remain responsive to the external world, whilst also planning sufficiently to organise our resource and to maximise the support for our

work. There are very different views about the extent to which we should do either, and how to do both if necessary.

We feel it is often assumed that planning and the flexibility to be responsive are mutually exclusive, but this is not necessarily so, and there has been inadequate discussion about this.

Manifestations include:

- Resistance to ‘planning’ in some quarters that goes beyond personal preference into belief about how best to work
- Resistance to ‘reactivity’ in some quarters because it is seen as exclusive of planning which some staff rely on.
- Confusion between planning, routine systems and processes, and major projects – all of which can make people feel tied up, but which require quite different responses
- Different planning horizons for different parts of the organisation

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing: leave things as they are
- b) Find a way to create real ‘white space’ in our approach so that we have spare capacity with which to respond much more quickly when an opportunity arises at short notice;
- c) Find a way to create rapid agility in our approach, so that we can move to different work much more quickly and drop what we were doing on something else, potentially on a large scale;
- d) Commit to planning our work in more detail so that we are better able to organise our resources over time and to attract bigger donations with these clearer plans;
- e) Accept that the nature of much of our work means that it is all but impossible to plan a large portion of our campaigning work and that we should simply be prepared to move on a much shorter term horizon, led only by our overarching vision and objective;
- f) Create as much space as possible by streamlining/simplifying our planning, systems and processes, as well as improving project management, to enable much more efficient and less time consuming engagement by staff.

H) WHAT IS THE RIGHT BALANCE IN OUR WORK BETWEEN OUR CAMPAIGNING NOW AND BUILDING OUR CAPACITY FOR THE LONGER TERM?

There are different underlying assumptions, and a lack of recent organisational discussion and joint learning, about this key question.

Manifestations include:

- Different views on whether we should have small reserves, or much larger reserves;
- Different views on whether we should focus almost entirely on working with our current, most committed supporters and audiences, or whether we should focus more on bringing in new groups of support;
- Different views on the degree to which we should put everything into our immediate campaigns vs investing in building the organisation and future bigger campaigns;
- Different views on the degree to which we should put everything into our immediate campaigns vs investing in building the movement we are part of for the future.

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing – continue to navigate the tension on an ad hoc basis;
- b) Focus mostly on our immediate campaigns, with very limited investment in our future development;

- c) All work aims to build our future effectiveness as well as our present impact and in doing so, we accept that only a certain amount of our resource can be invested in our immediate campaigns at a given time.

I) WHAT ARE OUR FAVOURED MODELS OF SOCIAL CHANGE AND CAMPAIGNING?

There are very different underlying assumptions, and a lack of recent organisational discussion and joint learning, about the different models of achieving social change, and what implications that has for our campaign models and other activities or approaches to social change we do or could engage in.

Manifestations include:

- Divergent views and misunderstandings of the role of mass activism and comms vs lobbying and specialised/local groups activism in achieving change.
- Assumptions behind the selection of campaign models on particular issues: a live example is the debate around the climate change campaign as to the relative value of mass activism and grass-roots movement building.
- Divergent views over the degree to which our resources and activities should be focused on campaigning alone vs investing in some other activities or approaches, such as education, public information, lifestyle or practical action in the community (whether for their own sake or to as entry-points to campaigning, or 'bridges' between campaigning and where most of the public are at – ie not involved in campaigning).
- We implicitly operate and contribute to a number of different social change models, and different campaign models within that. There are advantages to us in being able to operate several different models, as we are then able to adapt to the opportunities of the time or the needs of a particular campaign objective.
- However, within FOE there is no broadly shared understanding of, or language for, the different models available, which ones we specialise in or why.
- De facto, different individuals or parts of the organisation prioritise different models. And this leads to confusion and tensions.

Options for a response:

- a) Do nothing to clarify our range of potential approaches and continue to choose our models for change in an ad hoc way, but make more conscious choices about what models we are using and why;
- b) Improve our understanding of the different ways in which social and political change comes about, and how different campaign models and tactics can contribute to and impede each, *but have a single approach that we use all or most of the time;*
- c) Improve our understanding of the different ways in which social and political change comes about and how various models can contribute to and impede each; *and agree a range of approaches (small or larger) that we can deploy depending on context, including potentially non-campaign activities to provide a 'bridge' to Friends of the Earth for a wider, non-campaigning, public.*

5. Appendix

5.1. Glossary

Some terms in this document may not be immediately understandable but they are used as the best shorthand we can think of:

Strategic Architecture – every level of our organisational thinking that encapsulates what we want to see in the world and our part in helping that come to be. Each level of the architecture is defined under 5.1

Strategic Questions – the eighth questions we've shared over recent months, that seem to cut to the core of the things we need to talk about at the moment and reach some clear views on going forwards.

Charitable Objects – the overall objectives written into our binding charity documents that set out what our charitable work is in service of.

Below are the elements of strategic architecture that we expect to include in the final document that emerges the other side of the MTR – some elements already exist and may not change much if at all. Others are new or an attempt to give us a clearer 'label' for a particular piece of content that does already exist. We explain each of these below.

Vision:

The Vision is inspired by the Core Belief, and is usually best expressed as the *positive outcomes* that we hope will be manifest when the Need has been eradicated/ controlled successfully; it is what we are working towards. It is the inspirational change in the world that we are striving towards, even if we are contributing only a small part. It focuses on a 15-25 year time horizon.

Mission:

The Mission statement sums up the role of the organisation, what it does, how and where.

Values

Flowing directly from our Core Belief, our Values are the principles that underpin what we see as most important and the manner in which we conduct our work and behaviour.

Goals

The ambitious change that the organization wishes to see externally and internally over 5-10 years, to give a sense of ambition internally and tangibility externally. We wouldn't expect to deliver these on our own, but we'd be a strong part of the push for them.

Strategy

The particular ways we actually go about delivering on our Goals and Mission, clearly articulating our approach to everyone internally. This can include statements that explicitly rule in and rule out certain ways of working. Examples might include a political strategy or a fundraising strategy but we will also create an overall strategy statement to encapsulate our whole approach – parts of which could be said to exist in 'The Plan' section of SP2 appended.

Objectives

Specific external and internal changes and impacts that the organisation will aim to bring about through its own work, which, if achieved, will together move us toward our goals and vision.

5.2. SMT written contributions for the MTR

If you want the outline of the whole of phase 1 of the process, please read the [design document](#). This section just outlines key SMT papers for the MTR during phase 1, focusing on the points at which SMT will offer content and make decisions.

A) November SMT document – context and reference information

This document you are reading now. It aims to set the context for the MTR and provide basic information for reference.

B) Early January SMT document – insights to date

SMT will publish its further reflections following the November day. It will incorporate: thoughts from that day; summary, with key emerging themes, of the SP2 progress review (ongoing in the autumn); and ideas from the staff discussions from late November to mid January.

This document will still refer to the strategic questions but start to set out broad suggested answers about how we think our work and approach might be improved, and link these directly to the aspects of strategic architecture referred to throughout this document:

- Vision
- Mission
- Values
- Goals
- Strategy

This content will be offered as stimulus for the away days in February and should not be taken as SMT conclusions or decisions at such an early point in the process.

C) Late April SMT document – final conclusions for Board sign-off

From the synthesis phase, SMT will generate its final conclusions in relation to the strategic questions and our strategic architecture, covering updated / finalised content for:

- Vision
- Mission
- Values
- Goals
- Strategy
- Objectives

This will be signed off at the full Board meeting in May.

5.3. Strategic Plan 2008-2013

Our vision:

- A thriving planet and a good life for everyone on it, now and for the future.

Our mission - our unique role in achieving this:

- We will ensure governments and economies enable everyone to meet their needs and enjoy their fair share of a healthy environment while looking after it for future generations.
- We will inspire people to act together to influence the decisions that affect communities and the environment.

- We will drive solutions that tackle the root causes of environmental problems.

Our values define how we campaign. They are:

- **Involvement:** enabling people to play their part.
We are movement builders and work with people at many levels, from the local to global, from the grassroots to decision-makers. We believe the best way to achieve positive change is for people to be involved in the decisions that affect them.
- **Insight:** putting across intelligent solutions to environmental problems.
We go to the heart of the challenges, providing clear and credible analysis of the connections between political, economic, environmental and social systems.
- **Inspiration:** painting a compelling vision.
We are a catalyst for change, unlocking new ideas and solutions, and motivating people to work with us and to take action for themselves.
- **Influence:** making change happen.
We want to see real results, tangible and substantial improvements to people's lives and the environment, and the rules and systems that shape them.
- **Independence:** standing our ground.
We will be honest and free from influence of political, religious or business interest. Our integrity is vital to our credibility and therefore success.

The strategic context – The Challenge

Humanity faces a crisis. Growing population and massively expanding consumption is quickly undermining the natural systems on which all life depends. The emerging global crisis has many dimensions, but two stand out in scope, urgency and because of the number of people they affect: these are climate change, and the loss of biodiversity and natural habitats. Both are in turn linked to questions of unsustainable resource use and of environmental and economic justice – as the rich North consumes and pollutes the most while the poor South suffers most and soonest.

- Emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are leading to dangerous and potentially catastrophic climate change, threatening the lives and livelihoods of people throughout the world.
- Key natural habitats are being degraded and destroyed, dramatically increasing extinction rates and putting at risk many of the benefits humanity obtains from natural habitats. Tropical forests are particularly threatened.

Friends of the Earth exists to meet these challenges by campaigning for effective and durable solutions. Our goal is to achieve **sustainable development**, and sustainable societies – whereby everyone, throughout the world can live without poverty while maintaining environmental services and doing so in ways that will conserve the ability of people in the future to do the same.

The science to justify our case has got stronger, as has our knowledge of what needs to be done. Yet humanity as a whole is failing to respond. Too little is being done, too slowly. False solutions abound. Time is running out.

Our analysis

Our first strategic Plan, for the period 2003-2008, was based on a powerful analysis of the root causes of these problems. That analysis has not changed.

People's behaviour and impacts are mainly governed by the markets through which we meet our needs. In order to avoid a global disaster we must reform and regulate those markets, and make them contribute towards sustainable development, not damage it. Our analysis shows that markets need rules if they are to be harnessed in the service of humanity's long-term interests. Only action by governments, both individually and collectively can deliver these rules. People taking action themselves can hasten the culture change that will lead to political conditions that make new rules for sustainability more acceptable.

Those with power, politicians & business leaders and many Northern consumers, often share a world view that promotes damaging and unfair development. Well-being is measured through consumption and economic 'growth'; growth can be promoted by deregulating markets. They believe that all countries can benefit in this way (because they see no limits to our consumption) and that the best way of ending poverty is to expand economic activity. The policies that advance these assumptions have increased inequality and hastened environmental degradation.

In making the transition to a sustainable society we must create and communicate a powerful new vision that shows how, with better rights and better rules, our economies can meet everyone's needs now and in the future. The vision alone will not suffice, however. Our solutions will meet resistance and to prevail will need firm public backing.

To achieve sustainable development, we must therefore enthuse more people to support us – financially and by taking personal and political action. We must build an effective organization with high-quality staff working in an enabling and empowering environment. We must build alliances with like-minded organisations and movements - in the United Kingdom and around the world.

As citizens in a democratic society we have the opportunity to secure solutions, including by strengthening peoples' rights and empowering people to use them. Yet not everyone enjoys the rights that we do or the means to use them. In achieving durable solutions we must support campaigners overseas in their struggles to secure sustainable societies while working to strengthen governance for sustainability at the global level.

Ultimately, we must win campaigns that inspire support for real solutions. We have an incredible track record of success and by making careful and strategic use of our resources we can make the critical differences needed. Although time is short and the stakes increasingly high, we are optimistic about the prospects for change, and with determination and vigour we are going to achieve those changes.

Our goal is Sustainable Development

We therefore reaffirm that Friends of the Earth's long term strategic goal is to deliver sustainable development which improves the quality of life of all people, promotes justice and equity, respects environmental limits and maintains ability of future generations to enjoy a similar quality of life. This will involve:

- **Living within environmental limits:** respecting the natural systems on which we depend and the need to preserve resources and biodiversity – in order to improve our quality of life and ensure that the natural resources for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.
- **Achieving an environmentally just society:** in which inequalities of power and resources are reduced by promoting good governance and empowerment – in order to help meet the needs of people in existing and future communities by actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance so as to engage people’s creativity, energy and diversity.
- **Building a sustainable economy:** Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which enables people’s needs to be met and in which resources are used efficiently and environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them.

The strategic aims in this Plan will seek to fulfil this sustainable development ambition. We will campaign for sustainable development to be delivered at every level of activity – local, regional, national, European and international.

The Plan

We have chosen strategic aims to direct the major work programmes we envisage and what we want to achieve over the next five years.

We are concentrating our campaign effort on the two overriding challenges we face - preventing climate change and protecting biodiversity and natural resources. We will advocate changes to economies, in the UK and globally, so that they become more sustainable. We will continue to campaign to defend and strengthen people’s rights to participate in decisions affecting their environment. We will focus our work in the English regions and devolved nations to advance our national agenda at these levels and build the capacity of Friends of the Earth International as a campaigning force

We will present a clearer image of who we are and what we do and communicate our campaigning messages powerfully, to decision makers and public audiences. Through this and by presenting our supporters with clearer ways of engaging with us, we aim to boost our income and levels of activism. Finally, we have prioritised specific improvements in our organisation so that it becomes a more powerful campaigning force.

Aims and Objectives

1. Biodiversity and ecosystem services

Aim

To halt biodiversity loss and reverse the loss of ecosystem services by 2030 at the global, regional and national levels, in ways that protect the rights of people who depend on ecosystem services and enhance the sustainable use of natural habitats.

Objective 1

To mount a public awareness campaign to improve the understanding of targeted public audiences of the value of, and the threat posed by the destruction of, biodiversity and natural habitats to their well-being and the well-being of humanity as a whole.

Objective 2

To identify by end of 2008, and secure by 2013, with European and southern partners, effective measures and strategies to reduce the impact of EU livestock product investment and consumption on high biodiversity and high ecosystem value areas such as tropical forests

Objective 3

To ensure that by 2013 the UK Government has put in place targets and incentives through its Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy such that livestock farming systems in the UK reduce reliance on imported animal feed.

Objective 4

To ensure Europe's use of biomass and bio-fuels is sustainable by securing legally-binding measures within EU Directives and related UK law (Fuel Quality Directive, revised Bio-fuels Directive, and revised Road Transport Fuel Obligation) and elsewhere so as to protect ecosystems that are vital for biodiversity and human well-being.

Objective 5

To ensure the Voluntary Partnership Agreements agreed with key exporting countries under the EU's Fleg-t programme lead to community forest management, protect the rights of forest peoples and is supported by an EU ban on the sale of illegally logged timber.

Objective 6

To prevent the European Union from promoting and entering further trade, investment and economic partnership agreements that undermine it or partner governments' ability to reduce negative impacts on biodiversity.

Objective 7

Secure a change in World Bank rules which stops financial support for industrial logging and the conversion of forest to plantations.

2. Climate change

Aim

To get global concentrations of greenhouse gases on a trajectory to prevent average global temperatures exceeding 2 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels by promoting solutions, including the securing of legal and economic frameworks to reduce emissions in an equitable way and in a way that does not undermine biodiversity objectives

Objective1

To get a sufficiently strong and just international agreement on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010 to prevent global average temperatures exceeding 2 degrees C above the pre-industrial average.

Objective 2 (on hold until resources allow)

Ensure that in the second round of Kyoto the measures adopted to reduce emissions from deforestation are a) sufficient, alongside agreements in other areas, to prevent global average temperatures exceeding 2 degrees C above the pre-industrial average; b) will strongly support the well-being of forest communities and forest conservation; and c) not undermine efforts to reduce emissions in developed countries.

Objective 3

Ensure the EU engages in international negotiations on greenhouse gas reductions with a commitment to reduce EU emissions by at least 30 per cent by 2020 and 90 per cent by 2050 through steady reductions as its commitment to an agreement based upon the justice concept of "shared but differentiated responsibility".

Objective 4

To ensure that by 2012 the UK and its component parts has produced and has begun implementing a clear economic strategy that delivers the changes in tax, spend and regulations that deliver the required annual cuts in carbon dioxide.

Objective 5

Promote and secure the energy policy solutions and technologies, including at a local level, required to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the UK in line with those required for the UK to live within the carbon budget identified by the Tyndall Centre report 'Living within a Carbon Budget'.

3. Sustainable Economies and Resource Use

Aim

Identify the major transformations that must be made to the UK economy and economic policy, and secure actions to achieve these - so that we respect global environmental limits, ensure fair access to resources and pollution capacities, and deliver well-being to all people; and help catalyse transformations to the global economy. And implement improvements to UK and EU resource use.

Objective 1

Undertake an analysis* by end 2008 of (i) the transformations to UK economic activity and policy (affecting government, businesses and consumers) required to progress fulfilment of the aim, and the other campaigning aims and (ii) the mix of measures/ actions needed to respond to the analysis. The analysis to set specific objectives for the SP2 period; and make recommendations for external advocacy and implementation programmes.

Objective 2

Undertake both external advocacy and implementation programmes to fulfil this analysis and the Aim - and the other campaigning aims - in order to (i) secure changes to Treasury and UK government policy, and to UK economic activity; and (ii) influence EU/ global economic policy and activity. Ensure that Friends of the Earth campaign and communications staff and local campaigners understand this analysis, and have the skills to implement it; and conduct an annual review identifying progress towards the Aim and forward activity.

Objective 3

Ensure that campaigns in this and other Aims are working synergistically with the FOEI Economic Drivers programme so that both the objectives within our plan are delivered and we are significantly contributing to delivering objectives in the FOEI strategy.

Objective 4

Secure within five years, under the EU's Thematic Strategy on Natural Resources, a legally-binding framework to ensure that the EU reduces its consumption of resources over the next 25 years. The framework will ensure European resource consumption is measured by the European Commission and strategies implemented to reduce the impact of Europe's resource consumption on climate change and biodiversity, including through technology-forcing product regulations.

Objective 5

To reduce the consumption of resources in the UK through: waste minimisation and securing levels of recycling in excess of national targets, at the local level and regional level; and through resource efficiency programmes at the regional and national levels.

4. Rights

Aim

To secure a substantive right to a healthy environment in UK law; strengthen the Aarhus procedural rights; and empower people to use their environmental rights.

Objective 1

The Aarhus procedural rights to know, participate and challenge are defended and strengthened in the UK; and the substantive right to a healthy environment is on the UK political and legal agenda by 2013.

Objective 2

To use the Rights and Justice Centre to hold decision makers and polluters in the UK and abroad to account for environmental injustice, climate change and biodiversity loss; and strengthen the capacities of the UK legal system and the international legal community to uphold and extend rights.

Objective 3

Disproportionately affected communities are empowered to use their rights to drive policy change and reduce environmental injustice.

Objective 4

Planning frameworks are improved to ensure a transition to a low carbon based economy, and staff and activists are supported and skilled in using them.

5. Delivering Sustainable Development in Nations and Regions

Aim

Make a significant shift towards sustainable development in regions and nations, and assist the move towards Sustainable Development in the UK, predominantly through the delivery of the low carbon communities campaign but also assisting in the delivery of resource use, biodiversity and rights solutions as identified in other Aims and, where necessary, responding to significant cases of environmental injustices affecting those campaign areas.

Objective 1

By end of June 2008 plan and write joined-up campaign strategies for at least the first three years of the Strategic Plan encompassing all the activism, communications and campaigning work to deliver the Aim for each of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. With a strong focus on delivering low carbon communities. Deliver strategy in subsequent years.

Objective 2

Achieve 3-5 significant wins that have significance beyond the particular win/gain itself through focusing particular effort in prioritising gains in policy areas or geographical areas on issues of climate change, resource use, biodiversity or rights where it is possible to achieve advances that are ahead of what is possible at a UK level and/or can be used to enable greater progress at a UK level or other regional levels. Examples of these may be significant progress towards a low carbon economy in one region or city or an advance on a particular policy in Wales/ Northern Ireland (as has been seen in non-environmental areas such as tuition fees/prescription charges).

Objective 3

The governments of Wales and Northern Ireland use their constitutional powers to positively influence UK wide strategies on climate, biodiversity or rights.

6. International

Aim

Through effective collaboration with others secure a strong and co-ordinated FOEI federation that wins international campaigns on mutually agreed programmes.

Objective 1

To secure a strong FOEI federation and member groups through collaborations to create network development strategies at bilateral, European and international levels

Objective 2

To secure FOEI campaign wins on mutually agreed programmes by making effective and increased EWN contributions to the conception, development and delivery of campaign strategies.

Objective 3

Strengthen our contribution to and benefit from membership of FOEI by increasing EWN's understanding of and engagement with the federation

7. Reputation and Reach

Aim

Through the delivery of the Brand Strategy: ensure that Friends of the Earth's prioritised audiences recognise Friends of the Earth as the leading organisation that involves people in campaigning for solutions to the global sustainability challenges and makes life better for people.

Objective 1 – Internal understanding

All staff and the majority of local groups understand our organizational focus on climate change and biodiversity loss and our solutions approach and have access to guidance and tools to communicate it effectively in their work by the end of Year 2.

Objective 2 - External Coherence

Our communications tools and channels coherently communicate the global challenges to sustainability and the solutions to them and show our priority public audiences the value of taking action with Friends of the Earth.

Objective 3 - Effectiveness and high profile

We grow Friends of the Earth's visibility and accessibility to our priority audiences, increasing their understanding of our campaigns, our approach and our routes to involvement.

8. Supporter Development Aim

Aim

To maximise the value and commitment of all the people who support us.

Objective 1

More people become involved in our work, through easy access to appropriate information and opportunities and excellent supporter care.

Objective 2

Our supporters engage more often, in multiple ways, and over a longer period of time, taking into account their personal choices and preferences.

Objective 3

Increase our efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility in dealing with our supporters through the use of new media and technology.

9. Activism

Aim

In the UK, Friends of the Earth is supporting and empowering its expanded activist networks to act with sufficient force to achieve its campaign aims.

As a result, substantially more people in the UK feel empowered to take political action for environmental solutions.

Objective 1 – Group Action

Local groups are empowered to campaign highly effectively from local to global levels, as a stronger and more diverse network.

Objective 2 – Individual Action

Numbers taking effective types and levels of action individually will have grown sufficiently by 2010, to provide the considerable campaign pressure needed for SP2's campaign aims; harnessing the best from these activists throughout SP2 and building their capacity and commitment to Friends of the Earth for future campaigning.

10. Fundraising

Aim

To create a secure and stable income base for the organisation, sufficient to implement the strategic plan

Objective 1

To increase the number of financial supporters from 100,000 to **140,000** by 2013

Objective 2

To increase income from £10m to **£15m** per year by 2013 whilst maintaining an ROI of at least 3:1

Objective 3

To increase the percentage of income generated from non-individual supporters from £800,000 to **£1.3 million*** by 2013

**These figures are highlighted in red as they are subject to change pending a review of income projections to be completed by October 2008*

11. Organisational Development

Aim

Friends of the Earth is fit for purpose to deliver SP2

Objective 1

Friends of the Earth is a fast-moving, flexible learning organisation, in which a 'plan, do, review' culture enables us to plan rigorously, monitor progress and adjust work over time, driving good, timely decisions and clear communication of progress

Objective 2

Staff demonstrate the competencies and behaviour we need to deliver on SP2

Objective 3

Build and effectively manage the organisational knowledge and internal communication that are necessary to effectively deliver the strategic plan

Objective 4

Provide premises and office environments throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland that are appropriate for delivering our strategic aims.

Note: it will be possible to define additional objective measures when the premises strategy and implementation plan has been agreed.

Objective 5

Improve the quality and environmental efficiency of our operations, including office premises, so as to provide an inspiring office environment and one that we are proud of.

5.4. Strategic Plan 2003-2008 two pager

Tackling root causes of environmental problems:

Our plan

Since 1971 Friends of the Earth has been campaigning for positive change to protect the environment. We've had some brilliant successes and have grown unrecognisably in that time. But in the 21st century we face a number of key environmental challenges which are intimately connected to underlying social trends and the way that the economy operates.

These are problems such as the increasing drive for so-called '**free trade**', where in reality the balance of power is stacked hugely against those in the developing world, leading to a vicious cycle of poverty. Huge **corporations** like Tesco are coming to dominate the market to the extent that competitors are forced into a spiralling price war, squeezing suppliers to breaking point and leading to lower and lower environmental standards. And looming largest of all is the prospect of global **climate change**; our addiction to coal, oil and gas is causing the world to warm – with potentially devastating consequences for people, biodiversity and entire ecosystems.

Why aren't our leaders doing more? Sadly, all too often calls for action to protect the environment lose out to short-sighted claims that economic growth and 'development' will end poverty and improve people's quality of life. But events in the real world tell a different story; in 1960, the 20% of the world's population living in the richest countries were thirty times richer than the poorest 20%. By 1997, they were 74 times richer, and since then the gap has grown larger still.

Despite claims about progress, billions of people remain without the means to ensure a reasonable quality of life, while the rich continue to over-exploit the Earth's resources. It's hardly surprising that the environment is suffering. And the current economic policies jealously guarded by the West will only make this worse.

What must we do about it?

It's now clear that these issues cannot be tackled in isolation. We want to become the '**local to global**' organisation that helps governments and citizens connect their lives, assumptions and actions with environmental injustices and impacts across the world. Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland is well placed to take up these huge challenges. We have an expert, highly motivated staff body, a network of active local groups, broad public support and a high and positive media profile – and are a key member of the Friends of the Earth International network of national campaigning organisations. So by influencing policies and attitudes here in the UK – one of the most powerful nations on Earth – we can have a real impact at the international level.

We have a track record of coming up with effective and realistic **solutions** and getting the public to support them. Our recently-tabled Climate Change Bill – which would require the Government to show international leadership and legally commit to year-on-year cuts in emissions of climate-changing carbon dioxide – is a prime example of the kind of solution we'll continue developing and encouraging the public to support.

Ultimately, we want common-sense economic policy that takes account of environmental limits, and which ensures that everyone has access to their fair share of the Earth's finite resources and has a decent quality of life, both now and for future generations.

How will we do this?

We will continue to provide clear information and powerful facts, and present them to decision-makers and the public in a creative and engaging way. This leads to pressure on politicians and businesses from across society. It encourages the spread of greener lifestyles. And it will further grow our profile and support, attracting more people to our work.

We aim to influence politicians at all levels, from the local to the international, and work with like-minded and diverse organisations towards shared objectives.

To maintain an external impact we need to continue to grow and **develop internally**. As well as building our income, we must also increase the number of people that are prepared to support us and our international colleagues – from local campaigners to national supporters – and bolster our presence across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure that we can be truly active at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Our strategic plan is designed to deliver real progress by 2008 against these forward-thinking – but achievable – aims. And everything we do both internally and externally moves us one step closer to the fair and sustainable world we seek.

What sort of organisation are we?

Independent

Although we engage in debate and work with others, we vigorously defend our independence.

Activists

Only people can make the world better. We inspire and help people to be active as campaigners and push



Political participants

Although we do not seek power ourselves, we do seek to bring about better policies and laws via the democratic process – although we reserve the right to challenge the law openly, peacefully and accountably if we believe that it runs against

Local-to-global

We assist people to act for a sustainable world from their own perspective and make the links between local conditions and global problems.

Or to put it another way – **if Friends of the Earth was a person**, it'd be an intelligent, independent thinker, influential yet willing to listen to others, although not easily led. It'd be passionate about what it believes in and vocal about injustice.

And it would get on well with others across the world, who'd respect its integrity, honesty, and ability to make connections from the small scale to the big picture things that really make a difference to people's lives – and the prospects for our planet.